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The message of my Inauguration was that now is the time to seize Mississippi's Moment. Tonight, I want to talk about giving our people, and our economy, the tools necessary to do just that.

Later this week I will submit my budget. Our budget will broadly accept the Legislative Budget Committee's recommendations. Then it will highlight some additional spending priorities I consider crucial and how I plan to pay for them.

First and foremost, my budget will state very clearly that we do not need to raise anybody's taxes - period. Raising taxes is the enemy of controlling spending, and controlling spending is the way to get our budget back in line over the next two years.

I sense the Legislature's sentiment not to raise taxes, and I look forward to working with the Lieutenant Governor and President Pro Temp Travis Little and with Speaker McCoy and Speaker Pro Temp J.P. Compretta. I've already met with Ways and Means Chairman Percy Watson and House Appropriations Chair Johnny Stringer as well as Senate Chairs Jack Gordon and Tommy Robertson. I'm grateful for your attitudes of working together.

But tonight's address is not about our budget; it's about our blueprint. It's not about adding or subtracting, it's about multiplying Mississippi's potential.

Job creation is our state's most urgent need, and job creation will be the first immediate priority of my Administration. Better, higher paying jobs can only result if we have a business climate conducive to creating and retaining those jobs. I have some policy proposals in that regard that I want to share with you tonight.

And speaking of job creation, allow me to introduce a man who made good in Mississippi and now wants to do good for Mississippi - our new Mississippi Development Authority leader - Leland Speed. Mississippi is fortunate to have someone of Leland's stature as its ambassador to the business world.

